



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

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City of Devils Lake Receives National Drinking Water Award

BISMARCK, N.D. – The city of Devils Lake, N.D., has received the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Award for Sustainable Public Health Protection from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Chuck Abel, environmental engineer with the North Dakota Department of Health, presented the award on behalf of the EPA to Devils Lake at its City Commission meeting Tuesday, Sept. 8.

The 2008 DWSRF Awards for Sustainable Public Health Protection recognize the most innovative and effective projects that further the goal of clean and safe water through exceptional planning, management and finance. Devils Lake was recognized by the EPA for innovative and significant efforts to promote safe drinking water, including the construction of a new well field, raw water transmission main and treatment plant.

Before recent drinking water investments, the city of Devils Lake faced significant drinking water issues. The city's raw water transmission main was often inundated by flood waters from the nearby lake, which hindered repair and maintenance efforts. In addition, the city struggled with compliance issues, including arsenic regulations. To address these problems, the city of Devils Lake secured DWSRF funding to help construct a new well field, raw water transmission main and treatment plant. Project completion is expected in 2010. Four different agencies are providing funding for these projects, an example of the creative use of partnerships to meet the needs of small communities.

"The collaborative effort to improve Devils Lake's drinking water system is a potent example of the type of innovation that will help our nation's communities provide safe drinking water for decades to come," said Carol Rushin, EPA's acting regional administrator in Denver, Colo. "This project is a clear investment in the future health of the Devils Lake community."

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The Devils Lake project had to meet three mandatory criteria to qualify for the award, including compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act, financial integrity and public health benefits. In addition, the city had to demonstrate leadership in at least one or more of the following areas: better management practices, full-cost pricing/affordability, efficient water use, watershed approach, innovation in financing, innovative approach to planning and/or project implementation, and the creative use of partnerships.

For more information, contact Chuck Abel, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.5211, or visit EPA's website at www.epa.gov/safewater/dwsrf/.

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